

Chapter Two

The Inconscient and the Integral Yoga

The Descent of the Sadhana into the Inconscient

There is another cause of the general inability to change which at present afflicts the sadhak.¹ It is because the sadhana, as a general fact, has now and for a long time past come down to the Inconscient; the pressure, the call is to change in that part of the nature which depends directly on the Inconscient, the fixed habits, the automatic movements, the mechanical repetitions of the nature, the involuntary reactions to life, all that seems to belong to the fixed character of a man. This has to be done if there is to be any chance of a total spiritual change. The Force (generally and not individually) is working to make that possible, its pressure is for that, — for, on the other levels, the change has already been made possible (not, mind you, assured to everybody). But to open the Inconscient to the light is a Herculean task; change on the other levels is much easier. As yet this work has only begun and it is not surprising that there seems to be no change in things or people. It will come in time, but not in a hurry.

As for experiences, they are all right but the trouble is that they do not seem to change the nature, they only enrich the consciousness — even the realisation, on the mind level, of the Brahman seems to leave the nature almost where it was, except for a few. That is why we insist on the psychic transformation as the first necessity — for that does change the nature — and its chief instrument is bhakti, surrender etc.

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¹ *This letter was written in April 1944, the one that follows it in June 1944. The final letter in the group was written in April 1947. — Ed.*

The sunlit path can only be followed if the psychic is constantly or usually in front or if one has a natural spirit of faith and surrender or a face turned habitually towards the sun or psychic predisposition (e.g. a faith in one's spiritual destiny) or if he has acquired the psychic turn. That does not mean that the sunlit man has no difficulties; he may have many, but he regards them cheerfully as "all in the day's work". If he gets bad beatings, he is capable of saying, "Well, that was a queer go, but the Divine is evidently in a queer mood and if that is his way of doing things, it must be the right one; I am surely a still queerer fellow myself and that, I suppose, was the only means of putting me right." But everybody can't be of that turn, and surrender which would put everything right is, as you say, difficult to do completely. That is why we do not insist on total surrender at once, but are satisfied with a little to begin with, the rest to grow as it can.

I have explained to you why so many people (not by any means all) are in this gloomy condition, dull and despondent. It is the *tamas*, the inertia of the Inconscient, that has got hold of them. But also it is the small physical vital which takes only an interest in the small and trivial things of the ordinary daily and social life and nothing else. When formerly the *sadhana* was going on on higher levels (mind, higher vital etc.), there was plenty of vigour and verve and interest in the details of the *Asram* work and life as well as in an inner life; the physical vital was carried in the stream. But for many this has dropped; they live in the unsatisfied vital physical and find everything desperately dull, gloomy and without interest or issue. In their inner life the *tamas* from the Inconscient has created a block or a bottleneck and they do not find any way out. If one can keep the right condition and attitude, a strong interest in work or a strong interest in *sadhana*, then this becomes quiescent. That is the malady. Its remedy is to keep the right condition and to bring gradually or, if one can, swiftly the light of the higher aspiration into this part of the being also, so that whatever the conditions of the environment, it may keep also the right poise. Then the sunlit path should be less impossible.

The extreme acuteness of your difficulties is due to the Yoga having come down against the bedrock of Inconscience which is the fundamental basis of all resistance in the individual and in the world to the victory of the Spirit and the Divine Work that is leading toward that victory. The difficulties themselves are general in the Asram as well as in the outside world. Doubt, discouragement, diminution or loss of faith, waning of the vital enthusiasm for the ideal, perplexity and a baffling of the hope for the future are the common features of the difficulty. In the world outside there are much worse symptoms such as the general increase of cynicism, a refusal to believe in anything at all, a decrease of honesty, an immense corruption, a preoccupation with food, money, comfort, pleasure to the exclusion of higher things and a general expectation of worse and worse things awaiting the world. All that, however acute, is a temporary phenomenon for which those who know anything about the workings of the world-energy and the workings of the Spirit were prepared. I myself foresaw that this worst would come, the darkness of night before the dawn; therefore I am not discouraged. I know what is preparing behind the darkness and can see and feel the first signs of its coming. Those who seek for the Divine have to stand firm and persist in their seeking; after a time, the darkness will fade and begin to disappear and the Light will come.